

Eagle Creek Park

Earth Discovery Center Program Topics



Our programs focus on native Indiana flora and fauna. We seek to promote relationships with nature by familiarizing students with species found in their own community.

PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES:

Seasonal Nature Hike - our most popular program!

Explore the beautiful woodland trails of Eagle Creek Park with one of our talented volunteer naturalists! The goal of the hike is not how far we go, but how much we see, so keep your eyes open and your senses on high alert, and dress for being outdoors. *We subdivide hike programs into 10-15 students per naturalist, so be sure you bring enough adults so at least one can go with each group.*



Indiana Wildlife - often students are more familiar with sharks, alligators, and elephants than with wildlife living in their own backyards! From white-tailed deer to tiger salamanders, bald eagles to box turtles, students will learn about Indiana's fascinating array of wild animal residents. *Program may include furs, stuffed animals, taxidermy mounts, bones and skulls, and other animal parts/props as well as live reptiles, amphibians, or insects depending on the time of year.*

Insect Study - insects are the most diverse and abundant group of animals on earth. A few cause problems for humans, but most of them are beneficial, and without them life as we know it could not exist. Students will learn/review the basics of insect anatomy and life cycles, then head out to the field to try their hand at catching insects with sweep nets. *Please note: the best time for this program is late spring through early fall, before the first frost (roughly May-October), and we will not be able to sweep during rain or wet conditions.*

Insect Study Indoor Option - a great alternative during winter, inclement weather, or for groups wishing for a more in-depth study. We will use live and preserved specimens to explore insect diversity, adaptations, and life cycles.

Call 317-327-7148 to register

PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES:

Reptiles and Amphibians - students will get the opportunity to meet some of Indiana's native reptiles and amphibians and learn about what makes these two groups of animals so unique. Are snakes really slimy? Can turtles leave their shells? Come and find out! *Students will have the opportunity to touch a live turtle and/or snake.*

Pond Study Outdoor Option - we're very excited to introduce our new Geothermal Pond, made possible by grants from 3M and the Eagle Creek Park Foundation! Leeches and backswimmers, tadpoles and snails; these are just a few of the weird and wonderful creatures that inhabit the pond! Students will learn about pond life and use dip nets to scoop for pond creatures. Muddy shoes and clothes are a possibility - not recommended for groups that don't want to get dirty!



Pond Study Indoor Option - students will rotate between four to six stations stocked with samples of pond plants and animals and informational cards about each species. Some things are ok to touch (like slimy algae and snails) and some are not (backswimmers bite! But don't

worry, they have a lid). This program works best with plenty of adults to encourage and assist students as they explore. *Video Scope Indoor Option: recommended for groups with fewer adult helpers, or looking for a more guided introduction to the pond. We will use our video scope magnifying projector to give students a tour of the pond - watch zooplankton and dragonfly nymphs swim by on the big screen!*

We are a member of the Indiana Bicentennial Nature Center Network!

The BNCN has developed a land conservation curriculum for use by teachers and nature centers across the state in celebration of all Hoosier Children beginning the year of the state's bicentennial- 2016.

K-1st Grade: Habitat Hunt

2nd-3rd Grade: Geology

4th-5th Grade: Soils

PROGRAMS FOR PRESCHOOL - 1st GRADE:

Sensory Adventure - students will spend 10-15 minutes inside reviewing our five senses, then we'll head out on the trail for an easy half-hour hike. We will use four of our senses as we explore the natural

world. Sniff, look, listen, and feel, but please don't taste the bugs! *Since this program already includes an outdoor hike, we recommend choosing topics other than "Seasonal Nature Hike" if you will be doing more than one topic.*

Sensory Adventure Indoor Option - explore the wonders of our five senses as we sniff plant samples, listen to animal sounds, and get a chance to touch bones, furs, feathers, and more! What would it be like to hear like a rabbit or see like an owl? Are worms tasty? (Don't worry, we'll leave the worm tasting to the frogs!)

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PROGRAMS FOR 1st - 5th GRADE:

Build Your Own Habitat - what makes a good habitat? There's no better way to learn than by building one yourself! Students will create a small terrarium with a pill bug, millipede or other small, harmless creature to take home. Be sure to warn all adult helpers that students will be bringing home a harmless living creature! Creatures can go home with students, be kept in the classroom for further study, or released back into the wild at school or at home.

Nature's Adaptations - adaptations are the tools that allow plants and animals to survive, and they are all around us if you know what to look for. From bushy tails to webbed feet, from pretending to be a stick to playing dead, the countless adaptations of living things are sure to delight and amaze.

Nocturnal Animals - spooky and mysterious, or merely strange and curious, find out how the creatures of the night go about their business and survive in a world of darkness.



Animals in Winter - they don't have grocery stores and heated houses, but wild animals still manage to survive in the cold and snow. Learn about some of their amazing adaptations and see what lessons humans can learn about staying warm during the coldest time of year.

Pioneers and Plants - for pioneer children, knowing the names and uses of plants around them was essential to their survival. Rather than running to the nearest shopping center, food, medicine, clothing, and basic needs were obtained directly from the land. Students will become pioneers as they learn to look at the forest with an eye for survival. *Since this program is an outdoor hike, we recommend choosing topics other than "seasonal nature hike" if you will be doing more than one class.*

PROGRAMS FOR 3rd GRADE AND UP:

Tree Identification - this class will separate the opposite from the alternate, and the simple from the compound as we learn the basics of tree identification. *Mainly indoors with a short walk outside. Recommended May – October for leaf identification. Winter tree, bud and bark identification is also available.*

Water Olympics - students will put water through its paces as they attempt to make paper clips float and see just how much water will stick to a penny. Learn how the weirdness of water makes life as we know it possible.

Food Chains/Webs - what are the rolls of producers, consumers, decomposers and predators and prey? Discover how all living things in an ecosystem depend on each other and are connected through the food web.

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PROGRAMS FOR 3rd GRADE AND UP:

Incredible Journey - students will be able to describe the movement of water as they become water molecules and create a bracelet representing their travels as they journey through the water cycle.

Wonder of Plants - plants are vital to our survival in countless ways, and we eat them every day. How often do we stop to give them a closer look? From acorns to pine needles, celery to carrots, the wonders of plants are all around us. We will review the six basic parts of a plant and look at some real life examples and amazing adaptations.

Intro to Geology - what's the difference between a rock and a mineral? How are fossils formed? We will explore these questions and learn about the three main types of rock and the cycle that changes them. We will also discuss erosion and the forces that shape the world we live in.

Archery - we will go over archery terms and safety before students get to try their hand at this sport that is quickly increasing in popularity.

PROGRAMS FOR 6th GRADE AND UP:

Water Quality Testing - students will be divided into small groups to collect and test water samples from the park. Each group will determine pollution levels and come up with a water quality rating of poor, fair, good, or excellent for their given sample. At the end, groups will share their finding and explain why they gave their sample the rating they chose. *We will be using a variety of equipment to test our samples. It is best if students are already familiar with the water quality terms: pH, DO, turbidity, and total dissolved solids.*

All in one Aquatic Ecosystem Assessment (2 hour program):

Everything you need to begin your water quality study all in one place. Students will get their hands wet as they learn about bio-indicators, pollution tolerance, and all of the elements that provide a high-quality aquatic habitat. Students will then collect samples right out of the pond and conduct a series of tests to determine the answer to the question: *Is this water clean or dirty?*

**CALL TODAY
to set up your program**

317.327.7148

Eagle Creek Park

Earth Discovery Center

Open year-round!



9235 Delong Rd. Indianapolis, IN 46254
Mon-Sat: 9am-5pm, Sun: 1pm-5pm